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Educational Pamphlets, No. 52.

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**REPORT OF A COMMITTEE
ON THE
SELECTION OF PICTURES
FOR
PUBLIC ELEMENTARY
SCHOOLS**

LONDON:
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PREFATORY NOTE.

The following report was prepared by a Committee appointed by the President of the Board of Education to consider what general principles should guide the selection of pictures for Public Elementary Schools,

- (1) for the purposes of direct instruction,
- (2) for the purposes of schoolroom decoration, especially with a view to the cultivation of good taste and a sense of beauty among the scholars.

The members of the Committee were :—

- Mr. H. J. R. MURRAY, H.M.I. (Chairman).
- Mr. E. GLASGOW, H.M.I.
- Miss D. M. HAMMONDS, H.M.I.
- Mr. W. M. KEESEY, M.C., H.M.I.
- Mr. W. SCUTT, H.M.I.
- Mr. P. B. COLES, H.M.I. (Secretary).

The report appears to the Board to be of sufficient interest and value to justify publication, but it must not be inferred that the Board are necessarily in agreement with the opinions expressed.

BOARD OF EDUCATION,
WHITEHALL, S.W.1.
September, 1927.

20.12.1927



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REPORT ON THE GENERAL PRINCIPLES WHICH
SHOULD GUIDE THE SELECTION OF PICTURES FOR
PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.

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CHAPTER I.—Historical Retrospect.

1. The use of pictures in the Elementary School is a feature of comparatively recent growth. In the period before 1870 when the provision of elementary schools was still entirely a matter for private and voluntary effort, managers of schools were, perhaps not unnaturally, more interested in keeping down the working expenses of their schools than in spending money on things which were not required as a condition of state aid, and not certain to produce a return in the form of increased annual grant. Observers of the period speak of the "whitewashed simplicity" of the English Elementary School as characteristic, and it is probable that very few schools had any pictures on their walls other than a few of biblical subjects for use in scripture teaching.

2. The first provision of pictures of a secular character seems to have been made as a result of the inclusion of "class" and "specific subjects" in the Code of 1875. Among these subjects one of the most popular was "Animal Physiology," and pictures of animals which could be made the subject of lessons to the younger children, and physiological charts for the older children began to appear. R. H. Quick in 1868*, recognising the impossibility of introducing live animals into the school, had already urged that it was possible to introduce good pictures of animals and other natural objects which, he thought, would please the children as well, and in some cases even better than the real thing.

**Essays on Educational Reform*. (Edition of 1902, p. 476). The same writer implies that few text-books used in Primary Schools were illustrated, and thought that there was little chance of books with pictures that "were incapable of doing anything for children beyond affording them innocent amusement" penetrating into the Primary School.

3. The motive for the introduction of these and other pictures (historical and geographical) was purely instructional, and had little relation to any idea of beautifying or alleviating the plainness of "that region of asceticism, the English schoolroom." Yet, even before 1875, there were inspectors who were urging the decorative value of pictures and their unconscious effect upon children. In the General Reports of the Education Department for 1873-4, Mr. W. P. Turnbull, H.M.I., wrote (p. 115) of Manchester :

"It may not be out of place to suggest to managers and other benevolent persons a more thorough consideration how the walls of a schoolroom may best be furnished."

and again (p. 117) :

"Promoters of emigration would help their cause by encouraging Geography in schools. They might, for instance, present good maps or pictures of foreign places, taking care that the maps or photographs be *really brought to act on the minds of the children*, and not merely hung on the walls."

and Mr. H. E. Oakeley, H.M.I., writing of Durham (p. 140), said :

"In former days any room was good enough for the village school : we have advanced, but I do not think sufficient attention is paid to comfort and taste. There should be on the walls of every schoolroom a portrait of Her Majesty, and some carefully chosen prints or chromolithographs in plain wooden frames. A little colour too, judiciously applied, would greatly add to the cheerfulness of the room. These matters are not unimportant ; in a pit-village the effect on the children would be most beneficial.

I regret to say school-managers seldom think of such things."

In his report on Durham in 1876 (*General Reports*, 1876-7, p. 521), he returns to the point :

"Very few attempts are made to cultivate a love of beauty and refinement, which might be done in many ways. The people in this county, who have many good points, being generally kind-hearted, truthful, and of sturdy self-reliance, are most grossly rude and coarse in language and manner. Even such little things as attention to harmony of colours, flowers whenever they can be obtained, pretty pictures on the walls (such as the excellent chromo-lithographs occasionally issued by the *Graphic* and *Illustrated London News*), have by no means an unimportant influence, as I have often found."

The position in the Public Schools and Grammar Schools was probably very similar. The Art Gallery at Rugby was only begun in 1879, and Rugby was the first Public School in modern times to begin a collection of pictures.

4. Progress, however, was very slow in the Elementary School, and in the main was confined to a few of the larger towns in the north—Manchester, Bradford and Leeds being the first to

be mentioned in inspectors' reports between 1876 and 1883—and was at first due mainly to private generosity. One of the most prominent leaders in this good work was Mr. T. C. Horsfall, of Manchester, who was instrumental in organising in 1883 a system of circulating pictures in the Manchester Elementary Schools in connexion with the Manchester Art Museum (housed from 1886 in Ancoats Hall). The outline of this scheme was stated thus in a pamphlet issued in the end of 1882 :—

" For the purpose of enabling children to acquire familiarity with some beautiful things, the Committee intend to offer to the School Board, and to other Managers of Elementary Day Schools and Sunday Schools in Manchester and Salford, small loan collections of pictures, of casts, and of pottery, to be placed on the walls of the schools. Each object will be provided with a clearly printed explanation, and, when this is possible, with a description of the process by which it is produced. The pottery will consist of cups, jugs, and other things used in every house. The collections of pictures will include engravings, photographs, and chromo-lithographs, of such pretty scenes as town children see on the rare occasions when they are taken out of town—country lanes, woods, fields, farm-yards, shipping, and coast scenery; buildings, and places, and events which they read of in the Bible and in their geographical and historical lesson books. Each collection will also include good coloured pictures of common wild and garden flowers, ferns, grasses, forest trees, common birds, moths, and butterflies. It is hoped that children who are led to look with attention at the pictures will, when they see any of the things represented, look at them with more interest, and that, having seen the things, they will gain more pleasure from the pictures. It may be hoped also that familiarity with the pictures of flowers will tend to encourage the practice of growing plants at home.

Each school may from time to time have its collection replaced by another."

In illustration of the nature of the collections which were circulated under the scheme, two lists, one sent to an Infants' Department, and the other sent to a Department for older children, may be added :—

Collection of Pictures for Infants' Department.

Set U. 1.

1. Cassell's Wild Flowers. Frame I. Twenty plates. Dog Rose to Ground Ivy.
2. Cassell's Garden Flowers. Frame I. Twenty plates. Rose to Peony.
3. Chromo-lithograph after Birket Foster. Rustic Stile.
4. Brehm's Chromo-lithographs of Animals. Frame I. Eighteen plates.

5. Chromo-lithographs of Orchids, *Trichopilia Suavis*, and another.
6. Chromo-lithographs of *Nasturtiums*.
7. Chromo-lithographs of Birds. Lord Lilford's. Frame I. Thirteen plates. Golden Eagle to Raven, and two plates of Birds' eggs.
8. Hofmann's "Come unto Me." Small plates. Frame. Six plates and text. Scenes in the Life of Our Lord.
9. Caldecott. Frame I. John Gilpin.
10. Caldecott. Frame VII. Queen of Hearts.
11. Cassell's Butterflies. Frame I. Nine plates.
12. "Behold a Sower." Tract Society's coloured plate.

Collection of Pictures for Boys' and Girls' Departments.

Set B. 2.

1. Cassell's Garden Flowers. Frame I. Twenty plates. Rose to Peony.
2. Photographs of Places near Manchester. Frame II. Ten photos.
3. Cassell's Trees. Frame I. Twenty-four plates. Oak to Weeping Willow.
4. Brehm's Chromos. of Animals. Frame II. Sixteen plates.
5. Cassell's Butterflies. Frame II. Nine plates.
6. Hoelzel's Physical Geography plates. Great-Glockner and Plasterze-Glacier.
7. George's Etchings in Belgium. Frame I. Seven etchings.
8. Hofmann's Gedenke Mein. Frame I. Four plates. Scenes in the Life of Our Lord.
9. Charlemagne's Tribunal.
10. Kerner's Botanical Chromos. Frame I. Carnivorous Plants and eight other plates.
11. Autotype of Turner's Alps from Grenoble. Two wood-cuts and two line-engravings.
12. Cassell's Chromos. and Wolff's Wood-cuts of Birds. Frame II. Jay and fourteen other birds, and two plates of Birds' eggs.

5. Two points of interest are suggested by these lists of pictures, which were in circulation in Manchester from 1883 to about 1893, when the scheme was dropped for want of financial support. The first is the large use already made of pictures produced in Germany. The plates of animals were taken from Brehm's *Tierleben*, those of botany from Kerner's *Pflanzenleben*, those of geology from Neumayr's *Erdgeschichte*, while large use was made of the geographical series produced by Hoelzel, of Vienna. The second point is that the aim was predominantly instructional, and this was emphasised by the system of descriptive labels which were attached to each plate. The majority of

the frames included a number of separate pictures, chosen, not for their artistic value, but as vehicles for instruction, and without regard to the mental age of the children for whom they were provided. Few teachers of infants to-day would welcome the first collection of pictures in paragraph 4, which was made for loan to Infants' Schools.

6. In 1883, largely under the inspiration of Ruskin, Miss Mary Elizabeth Christie founded the *Art for Schools Association*,

“in the interests of young children, to improve the aesthetic aspect of their schoolrooms, to inculcate in the mind of children, especially in poor and congested districts, some idea of what may be considered beautiful in art and in nature, some knowledge of pure and noble types of humanity ; and to help teachers in their work and in their influence.”

The Association proposed to achieve these objects by supplying reproductions of standard works of art to schools of all classes at reduced prices, by publishing subjects especially suitable for use in schools and selling these at the lowest prices, and by lending, and occasionally giving, groups of framed engravings, photographs, etchings, etc., to poor schools.

7. The Art for Schools Association organised a “tentative” exhibition in the rooms of the Fine Art Society, New Bond Street, London, from 17th December, 1883, to 1st February, 1884. They issued a catalogue of those pictures of which they were able to supply further copies :—

“endeavouring to represent the several classes of work represented in their circular, i.e. pictures of simple natural objects, animals, peasant and artisan life, famous architectural works, landscapes, seascapes, etc.”

The works were issued in convenient “groups,” ranging in price from £2 6s. to £6 5s. per group of seven or eight pictures, while “any desired combination of subjects could be arranged.” A descriptive catalogue of the collection was included, comprising work from artists of the Modern School (30), Italian School (15), Spanish (2), and German and Dutch (7), and giving a short biography of each artist for the information of the teacher.

While this catalogue contained many fine works of art, it must be confessed that it gave little indication that any definite principle had guided the selection, and nearly every group consisted of an example from each school of painting which were put together without any common or guiding plan. The Modern School also contained many examples of pictures the mediocrity of which has long since been recognised. In effect, the collection aimed at a brief historical survey with a distinct preference for recognised “Old Masters,” and avoided the question of their decorative value, or of practical advice upon its solution.

8. The work of the Manchester Art Museum, and the foundation of the Art for Schools Association, brought the subject of the provision of pictures in the Elementary School into the forefront of educational discussion, and it held a prominent place in the proceedings of the first International Conference on Education which was held in London in 1884 in connexion with the International Health Exhibition. In the course of the discussion upon the paper on "The Use of Pictures and other Works of Art in Elementary Schools," which was read by Mr. T. C. Horsfall, certain definite principles were first enunciated :—

- (1) There should not be too many pictures.
- (2) The pictures should sometimes be changed.
- (3) If good pictures of decorative value were provided, maps, diagrams, pictures of the internal construction of the body, and objects of that kind, might be kept out of view until they were wanted.
- (4) The value of pictures for young children depends upon their having somebody to guide them and point out to them their beauty or meaning.

The third point was urged strongly by Mr. J. G. Fitch, H.M.I., on the ground that these "teaching" illustrations were not the true kind of decoration for the walls of a schoolroom.

9. In the next twenty years (1885–1904), largely as a result of the efforts of the National Society, the Art for Schools Association and similar bodies, much progress was made in the supply of pictures, both for instruction and for decoration, in those Elementary Schools of England and Wales which were provided first by the School Boards, and, after 1902, by Local Education Authorities. As a general rule, no special expenditure was undertaken on the provision of pictures, but Head Teachers were allowed to submit proposals for the purchase of pictures as part of their requisitions for the supply of school books, stationery, apparatus and school material, provided that the total expenditure fell within the limits laid down by the Authority. No general principles appear to have been laid down anywhere which governed the selection of pictures, and the choice was left to the Head Teacher concerned, and depended on his individual taste and the supply available, but his choice had to be approved by the Authority and in some cases—the London School Board for example—the Authority referred proposals to a Picture Sub-Committee. The larger Authorities published lists of pictures which they had approved for use in schools, and some—London for example—arranged permanent exhibitions of pictures on their approved list.

10. Since money for the purchase of pictures had to be saved from the meagre allowance for the purchase of school material in general, schools were compelled to look for pictures which were cheap, and the choice of good pictures was necessarily restricted.

The reproductions of the Arundel and Medici Societies were for the most part out of reach, and schools were largely dependent for coloured pictures upon the colour plates issued with Christmas Annuals. The cost of reproduction in colour was still high, and publishers were still unaware of the growing demand for coloured pictures for the decoration of schools. The Art for Schools Association, one of whose aims was to supply good pictures cheaply, was mainly driven to the reproduction in black and white of such pictures of artistic merit as appeared *prima facie* to be suitable for hanging on the walls of a school.

11. About 1891 a group of artists under the leadership of Mr. Heywood Sumner designed a series of coloured pictures for use in schools which were published by Mr. Sumner under the name of the FitzRoy Publishing Society. The aim of this Society was to produce an inexpensive series of pictures in colour for instructional use but having at the same time a decorative value. They had, however, little effect in raising the standard of the coloured picture produced in this country.

12. Meanwhile, a group of artists in Munich, following the lead of the French in the field of lithography, began to produce auto-lithographs for use in German schools. They held that pictures designed for the purpose and consisting of broad outline and colour masses, were of greater educational value for children than reproductions of pictures which had been made for a different purpose and with no thought of multiplication by another medium, whether in black and white or in colour. Their pictures were very attractive from their breadth of outline and colour, and their cheapness soon made them very popular in England, notwithstanding the fact that the subjects were all foreign and unfamiliar to English children. By 1906 the majority of the school pictures on the London approved list were German auto-lithographs.

13. In 1906 the London County Council arranged an exhibition of German auto-lithographs with a view to stimulating English publishers to produce English pictures of the same excellence. Unfortunately no English firm was prepared to produce similar pictures without a financial guarantee which Education Authorities were unable to give, and the only result was that the German firms noted the criticism and within three months submitted six British views for the approval of the London County Council. The German auto-lithograph continued to hold the field right down to the outbreak of the War.

14. One effect of the War was to cut off the supply of the German auto-lithographs, and the London County Council took the opportunity to make a further attempt to stimulate English publishers. A strong Committee was appointed for the purpose in 1917, under the chairmanship of Sir Cecil Harcourt Smith, and under the direction of this Committee the London Central School for Arts and Crafts prepared a set of six pictures

for reproduction, and thereby showed that it was possible to produce auto-lithographs in London which were up to the standard of the best foreign work. The theory on which this Committee worked is thus stated in its Interim Report of 1920 :—

" There is practically no limit to the range of the school picture, but to serve an educational purpose the range must be an orderly one, and have a definite starting point. This starting point should be British ; not from the blindly patriotic and prejudiced point of view, but because a knowledge of one's own country and national heritage is a necessary beginning to a more extended study of foreign countries. Therefore in devising a scheme of school pictures for British children, the first and essential group should be national in inspiration with an instinctive appeal—foreign pictures can never make the same appeal. Further, if a due sense of proportion is to be observed, it may be necessary to go down to the foundations of history, to study even the beginnings of things, in order to be able to trace the growth of British manhood and British ideas, and to place them in their due relation. Hogarth, Reynolds and Gainsborough, Turner, Constable and Cotman, saw England and Englishmen with English eyes ; they built up the great English school of painting, and an equally national school is possible, and should be build up in school pictures. The originals should, as a rule, be designed definitely for the purpose, but there may be existing examples suitable for adaptation. In either case, to be fit for their purpose, the originals and the reproductions, which often might necessarily be very free renderings of the originals, should be considered from the point of view of both utility and taste.

" School pictures, although decorative, should not be confused with school decoration. Their purpose is educational. They are intended to stimulate intelligence by aiding the pupil's imagination to visualise history, geography, mathematics ; in short, to help him to reason from the thing seen. The ideal school picture, while offering every facility for the self-expression of the teacher, should, on the other hand, avoid the error of over-explaining ; it should, in fact, be instinct with suggestiveness both for the teacher and the taught. The examination system, which has come to be looked upon as a necessary evil in our educational system, has tended to exaggerate the importance of bare facts. What seems to be needed is rather to provide for the youthful mind the framework into which the facts acquired later may fit themselves, and a pathway which may lead them to the edge of great ideas, towards which the teacher and the child may find their own way."

15. In this statement of theory we meet for the first time with an explicit definition of the *school-picture* as something *sui generis*.

In formulating this theory Sir Cecil Smith's Committee was no doubt largely influenced by the special circumstances of the time—the success in England of the German auto-lithographs, pictures definitely composed and produced with a view to multiplication for use in schools; the stoppage of supply of these pictures on the outbreak of war; and the popular demand that this country should henceforth be more self-sufficient—and failed to realise that the success of the German auto-lithographs was due as much to their cheapness as to any conviction of their superiority to other pictures. The Committee adopted the view "that the school picture should be designed for its purpose" and turned aside to questions of production and the problems of technique involved. In a later section of our report (*see* paragraphs 31–33) we shall discuss this theory of the "school picture."

16. Sir Cecil Smith's Committee was dissolved in 1920 owing to the refusal of the London County Council to receive its Interim Report. Meanwhile, in 1919, the British Association had appointed a Committee "to enquire into the provision of Educational Charts and Pictures for display in Schools," and its report was published in 1921. This Committee confined its attention to the compilation of a list of pictures, classified by subjects, "suitable for display in schools for decorative rather than purely educative purposes." It accordingly instituted a search for

"pictures which, while primarily educational in value, were accurate representations of the subjects, and would also stimulate the imagination of the pupil, inculcate the spirit of inquiry, and foster the appreciation of artistic merit."

17. In 1922, the London County Council appointed a small Advisory Committee under the chairmanship of Sir Cyril Cobb, M.P. to bring before Local Education Authorities the necessity for the supply of suitable school pictures and to secure a measure of encouragement to the publishers to produce them. The Associations of Education Committees and of Directors and Secretaries were represented on this Committee. Its aims are stated in a circular letter which was written at their instance by the late Mr. F. J. Leslie in 1924:

"The object of the Committee is to introduce to the Schools new types of Pictures, more interesting and attractive than those now usually to be seen on School walls, and at the same time inexpensive, and also to encourage the more frequent change and circulation of them . . .

"The object of the Committee is not merely to provide a pleasing and attractive picture for the school walls, or on the other hand a pictorial text from which lessons may be given, or even an artistic object which may insensibly react upon the children's innate sense of art and beauty, but something which may combine in due proportions all these features."

The letter goes on to say that

"in making the selection they have done, the Committee have not by any means reached their ideals of what School Pictures ought to be, but have only, with the materials at present available, made progress, they hope substantial, towards those ideals. Their desire is to gather information, acquire experience, and obtain reliable guidance, which will enable them to go forward towards the end they would like to reach."

With this end in view the Committee offered a prize for the best written suggestions for ten school pictures. This prize was won by Mr. W. B. Whittaker of the Gravesend Junior Technical School, and his essay was published in the Kent Education Gazette for September, 1923, while one of the historical pictures which he suggested has been produced by Messrs. G. Bell and Sons, Ltd. Sir Cyril Cobb's Committee is still in existence.

18. In addition to the wider action described in the preceding paragraphs, valuable assistance has been given locally during the last thirty years by voluntary agencies in the circulation of pictures on loan. Among these may be mentioned the circulation of pictures to schools in the East End of London, which Toynbee Hall started as long ago as 1895, the scheme for the circulation of pictures in Buckinghamshire schools which began as a result of an exhibition of pictures, organised by Lady Verney in 1899, and the lending of original pictures to Preston Schools by the Preston Art Gallery. In more recent years Mr. J. C. Stewart, Librarian of the Bermondsey Central Public Library, has organised a scheme for the circulation of coloured reproductions of pictures in the schools of Bermondsey.

CHAPTER II.—The Case for Providing Schools with Pictures.

19. While it is true that schools are more amply equipped with pictures than they were fifty years ago, all our information goes to show that the position is still far from satisfactory. First, equal importance is not attached to pictures in all parts of the country. Some Local Education Authorities have been conspicuous for the interest they have shown in the provision of pictures in their schools, but there are very many who appear to place little value upon Art as a means of education. Second, even in the case of those Authorities which have done most to equip their schools with pictures, the actual provision is often unsatisfactory because it is based upon no clear perception of the part which pictures should play in education. This is due, no doubt, to the fact that the reasons for providing schools with pictures have not been fully appreciated. The early advocates of "Art for Schools" presented no clear case. Their motives were confused: on the one hand they urged that improvements should be made "in the aesthetic aspect of classrooms" with

a view to "arousing interest and pleasure in beautiful things," on the other they held that pictures were a means of "widening the knowledge" of the children, and of making the teacher "give the children in a way that is pleasant both new and clear ideas about many things." Even Sir Cecil Smith's Committee was still preoccupied with the idea that school pictures should be chosen only for their instructional value.

20. Pictures may be of value for the decoration of the walls of a school; pictures may be a valuable adjunct to the formal work of the classroom; but both decoration and instruction can be carried out without their assistance. The case for providing pictures in schools rests ultimately on their importance in connexion with aesthetic training. Aesthetic training cannot be carried on unless children live in contact with beautiful things. And without aesthetic training one of the three desires of the spirit—to do what is right for the sake of doing what is right, to know the truth for the sake of knowing the truth, to desire beauty for the sake of beauty—is left unsatisfied.

21. There has been during the last thirty years a very noticeable change in the general conception of education. Whatever the causes of the changes are, and we are not here concerned with them, two very definite ideas emerge out of the shifting currents of opinion as to the meaning of education, its value, its aims and its practice. The first idea is that of the importance of considering very carefully the needs of the individual child with a view to securing his proper development in every sense of the term. The second is that the welfare of the community is vitally affected by the kind of education which the individual receives.

22. From the point of view of the development of the child it is held that contact with works of art is necessary because it is not enough to train the child's intellect and develop his moral character; the emotional side of his nature must be developed also. Enlightened opinion throughout the country has for some time past considered it essential for the growing child to have opportunities of responding to the appeal of good music and of good literature. Singing and dancing, poetry, dramatic and romantic literature, are universally accepted as part of the curriculum of the school, not because they are useful in the sense that it is useful to learn to read print, to write legibly and to know how to calculate arithmetically, but because they give an outlet to the emotional side of a child's nature through a growing sensitiveness to beauty of sound, movement and language which would otherwise be lost.

23. Contact with pictorial art is just as necessary because it opens to the child another outlet to the emotional side of his nature through a growing sensitiveness to beauty of line, form and colour. By giving a child the opportunity of responding to the appeal of pictures, the school extends the range of the emotional

training which is already given in part through singing, dancing and literature. The power to enjoy and appreciate beauty in whatever form it is expressed is a fundamental element of human experience, and, as has been well said, is one of the "manifestations of those higher qualities of mind which distinguish man from other creatures," but it has to be cultivated if it is to have the full meaning that it should for the life of the individual.

24. Contact with pictorial art ought undoubtedly to be contact with the actual work of great artists, and it may be urged that this should be secured by visits to picture galleries where originals can be studied and enjoyed. We do not desire in any way to dispute the value of visits to galleries when carefully planned, but they can only be occasional and cannot, in our opinion, make up for the living with pictures, even if these are only reproductions, which is possible in schools. Moreover, a gallery contains pictures of all kinds and degrees of difficulty, while the school can, and should, select its pictures with an eye to the stage of development of its children. But the real answer to this contention is that this country is not well supplied with picture galleries, and, except in the larger towns, the majority of English children are compelled to grow up without the chance of ever visiting a gallery. Unless the school has its store of good pictures, an adequate training of the aesthetic impulses in children is impossible outside of a few of the larger towns.

25. The case for providing schools with good pictures, then, is based largely upon the conviction that they can constitute an important means of giving that aesthetic training which, so far as music and literature are concerned, has already been accepted generally as being necessary for the full development of the individual. It is possible even that the good picture may be found a more potent means than any other of training the child's feelings. He may learn, perhaps more readily, through the eye to experience the thrill which arises from the contemplation of the beautiful. The boy or girl who has been led at school to take an interest in good pictures and has learnt in some measure to respond to the emotional experience of the artist, will be in a better position later to estimate at its true value much that is presented to him as beautiful. He will have at his command too, a source of happiness of which at present but few partake, for his capacity for enjoying his leisure time will be immeasurably increased. Moreover, he will have a reservoir of feeling in later life which will insure him against two evils characteristic of the modern world—restlessness and ostentation. For there is no self-seeking where there is true art.

26. Aesthetic training, if properly devised, can also at a later stage than that possible in the Elementary School, provide a discipline of a wholesome kind by insisting upon a study of the qualities which make the picture a work of art. It is possible, indeed, to give to the teaching of drawing—which is too often

regarded and practised merely as a training of hand and eye—a fuller value by connecting it with the study of good pictures.
For—

“The power to produce beauty is not a gift grudgingly given by the gods to a mere sprinkling of fortunate beings, but an ability which, though varying in strength like other abilities from individual to individual, is yet as universal as the power to learn arithmetic.”*

27. By whatever method the child is led to enjoy and understand a work of art, he will be learning to do more than merely admire or take pleasure in a beautiful thing. He will be learning in a sense to recreate. As his power to appreciate the true artist's work grows, he will come to recognise that his own feelings are expressed and represented more truly by the artist than he himself can express them. If in this way, finally, he comes to regard works of art as idealised presentations of his own emotions, and if he has been subjected to the exacting discipline that artistic studies afford, his value as an individual will be correspondingly increased.

28. That the community will benefit as the result of the fuller development of the individual is obvious. The demands of those who advocate expenditure on pictures and other means of cultivating a taste for the fine arts and developing sensitiveness to beauty in the young, gain added force when the needs of society are considered. These advocates assert that in spite of the advance of science the sum total of happiness has by no means increased. The conditions of modern industry, tending, as they do, to make the working life of large numbers of human beings increasingly more mechanical, have led them for want of a more suitable outlet to their emotions to seek happiness in their leisure time in directions which history shows lead only to national decay. The restlessness, too, and the ostentation which are such marked features of the present time require an antidote. Society needs a new set of values, and these the fine arts will help to supply. But first the ever-widening gulf between those who pursue art disinterestedly and in all sincerity and the great mass of the population needs to be bridged. This, we believe, is what aesthetic training can do by bringing the young into contact with the works in which great artists have expressed their emotions. For if they can be brought gradually to realise something of the stillness of the great artist's attitude to life which results from his pursuit of that which is eternal, they will tend to become less restless themselves as they grow up. And if they catch, as it were, a glimpse of the impersonal quality of beauty, their moral character, for a reason other than that advanced of old by Plato,

* T.P. Nunn, “Education, its Data and First Principles” (London 1920) page 79, in discussing William Morris's application of Schiller's theory of “pure” art to craftsmanship.

will be profoundly affected. They will be less inclined for ostentation and have less need for imitating or envying those who now seem to them to be "better off." For they will possess something which will be a joy for ever to themselves and to all with whom they share it.

CHAPTER III.—The School Picture.

29. The use of pictures for giving aesthetic training, or, in the words of our reference, for assisting in "the cultivation of good taste and a sense of beauty among the scholars" is not the only way in which pictures are of service in schools. They are also of very great assistance for purposes of direct instruction in order that children may easily and surely arrive at clear and accurate ideas of things about which they read or are instructed. In the third place they serve an important purpose as a means of wall decoration. The first and third uses, however, will usually be fulfilled by the same pictures : it is precisely the picture which is of value for the training of taste that will possess the decorative value which entitles it to a place on the schoolroom wall. Occasionally such a picture may in addition possess an instructional value, but, except in the case of the historical portrait by a great master, this will be an accident. We shall, accordingly, consider school pictures in the following chapters under the two heads : pictures whose main purpose is the training of taste ; and pictures whose main purpose is to aid in the teaching of definite subjects of instruction, such as history, geography and nature study.

30. This distinction is not an arbitrary one, but is a necessary result of the purpose which the two classes of picture respectively serve. The main requirement of the picture which is to be used for purposes of direct instruction is that it shall be trustworthy in detail so that it may give rise to clear ideas of things as they exist or have existed. The necessary requirement of the picture which is to be used for the training of taste is that it shall be fired and transmuted by the imaginative vision of the artist. In other words, the picture which is to be used as an aid to the teaching of a subject must be predominantly scientific or photographic in treatment ; the picture which is to be used as a means of training in taste must be predominantly imaginative. It is only in very rare cases that these two qualities are found in combination : as a rule, one or the other suffers. No teacher of engineering would go for detailed information to Joseph Pennell's boldly conceived lithographs of War work in England.

31. It is important to make this distinction clear, because failure to realise it has led to much confused thought in the past. Sir Cecil Smith's Committee envisaged the creation of a national "school" of pictures produced specially for use in schools and equally satisfactory whether judged from the point of view of

utility or taste. "Utility and taste," it was stated in their Interim Report,

"are not incompatible. They are not only compatible; but in all good art, which is thoughtful workmanship, the tastefulness of a thing arises from its fitness for its purpose. Thus a really good diagram is a work of art, as is also a really good map, and these things should be included in school pictures. School pictures, although decorative, should not be confused with school decorations.

Their purpose is educational."

The British Association Committee, although it claimed to have selected its pictures for decorative rather than purely educative purposes, yet included in a list of pictures suitable for the illustration of lessons in botany and nature study, Crome's "Poringland Oak," Leader's "Valley of the Llugwy," and Hobbema's "Avenue of Poplars," alongside Mr. Henry Irving's photographs of trees and Mr. Kearton's photographs of "Birds and Beasts at Home."

32. So far as the use of pictures for purposes of direct instruction in definite subjects of the curriculum goes, we may agree with the doctrine of Sir Cecil Smith's Committee that they should be designed for the purpose. Their use here is purely utilitarian, and anything which distracts the mind from the immediate purpose, blurs and confuses the lesson which the picture is intended to give. But when we turn to the other uses of pictures in schools, we differ absolutely. We are convinced that a love of beauty is innate in children, but we believe also that in order to strengthen and develop that love it is necessary for the child to live in contact with beautiful things. In seeking for beautiful pictures to place before children we can admit no limits to our freedom of choice. Moreover, the masterpieces of the past in art are a part of the heritage of the race, and to cut off children from this heritage in order to give them school pictures specially designed for the purpose, would be to give them stones when they ask for bread. It is inconceivable that anyone would advocate in music a course which would confine children to music composed especially for schools and deprive them of any share in Mozart, Bach and Beethoven, or a course in literature which would confine them to books written for schools and exclude the great writers of the past. It is by contact with the masterpieces of art, music and literature that the emotions are enriched and disciplined.

33. Nor do we agree that we should build exclusively upon a British foundation. Art knows no country. We hold that the range and scope of pictures in a school should be based solely upon the children's innate love of beauty and their growing powers of understanding and appreciation. The work of British artists will have an honoured place in any sound scheme of selection not because it is British but because it is good or because at times it deals with more familiar things.

34. It is inevitable that schools must depend for their pictures upon reproductions. A few Picture Galleries (e.g. Preston) have been able from time to time to circulate original pictures in schools in their neighbourhood, and we understand that the Arts' League of Service is considering a scheme for lending to schools collections of original works by modern artists, but the number of Elementary Schools will always prevent any wide use of original pictures. As we have already stated, the paucity of Picture Galleries in the Provinces and their remoteness from the great majority of schools in this country forbid any real use of galleries as an instrument for training and extending the children's love of beauty. The Elementary School must therefore look to reproductions for its pictures.

35. The question of reproduction is therefore of great importance, for even the best reproduction of an oil-painting loses something of the appeal of the original and must be regarded rather as a reminder than as a replica of it. Consequently it is most desirable that whenever possible the original should first be seen, even though a good reproduction be used for further study. In the case of water-colours the original is not quite so indispensable, for some of the modern processes can give a reproduction so perfect that it can hardly be distinguished, especially when under glass, from the original painting. With etchings and engravings again, the best reproductions are satisfactory substitutes for the originals : for example, the splendid series of aquatinted and mezzotinted etchings forming Turner's "Liber Studiorum" has been reproduced in close facsimile, and so have many of the modern as well as the older etchers. Again, the best reproductions of actual drawings in pencil, pen and ink, chalk and charcoal, when printed on suitable paper by the latest "offset" process, can scarcely be distinguished from the originals.

36. The great oil-paintings, however, will undoubtedly form the chief store-house from which pictures for schools will be drawn, and the character of the reproductions of these masterpieces needs careful consideration if the fullest value is to be gained from them. There is first the question of size. It would be superfluous to mention this point, were it not common experience that huge oil-paintings such as Titian's "Bacchus and Ariadne," and small water-colours whose dimensions are only in inches what the oil-paintings are in feet, are often reproduced both the same size and without any indication on the prints of the actual size of the originals. To people who have seen the real pictures this may be of little consequence, but to those who only see the reproductions, the omission will undoubtedly lead to great misconceptions. In particular, the colouring will be seriously falsified ; thus, where a certain portion of the original painting has small adjacent patches of pure bright colour (such as may occur in the flowery foreground of a Botticelli), a very diminutive reproduction will cause these to coalesce into an almost neutral

grey. It is therefore important that the reproduction should not be too greatly reduced in size ; and in any case the actual size of the original should always be stated on the reproduction.

37. The next point to be considered is the method of reproduction. Before the introduction of modern photographic processes, the usual method was chromo-lithography, which, at its best, produced some very fine results. For example, a chromolithograph (size about 2 ft. by 1½ ft.) of Gainsborough's "Mrs. Siddons," published about 20 years ago as a supplement to "Black and White," is in many respects, especially in glowing richness and depth of colour as well as in permanence, a finer reproduction than those now produced by photographic processes. The series of Turner's water-colours published years ago by Rowney and Co. were also excellent examples of artistic chromolithography, possessing certain qualities which are not usually found in process-reproductions. Other examples might be mentioned.

38. The best process of photographic reproduction now in use is colour collotype, as used for producing the Medici prints, in which the printing-surface is plate-glass coated with bichromated gelatine, and the method of printing is somewhat similar to lithography. Unfortunately, it is uncertain and expensive. The cheaper kinds of colour prints are produced by the "three-colour process," which employs three photographically produced printing blocks, one of which prints yellow, one red, and one blue (there is often a fourth printing of black or grey). The blocks are made from negatives prepared by placing in front of the sensitive plate a "screen" consisting of a fine network of lines ruled on glass. Exposure through this screen breaks up the photographic image into dots, which may be seen by examining any "half-tone process" print with a magnifying glass. A three-colour print will thus consist of multitudes of yellow, red and blue dots, varying in size according as the light and dark tones of the picture vary. In the lightest portions the dots are mere pin-points, and, as the tones become darker, the dots increase in size until in the darkest portions they blend together and produce a solid mass of deep colour. A pure blue portion of the picture will show under the magnifier blue dots only ; a green portion will show yellow and blue dots, with some red ones in the shadows, an orange portion yellow and red dots, etc.

39. From this brief description it will be evident that the choice of the printing inks with which the prints are made is a matter upon which the truth of the results greatly depends ; and it unfortunately happens that a red of the correct colour is not very permanent. Consequently an ordinary three-colour print which is exposed for some length of time to a strong light will become but a travesty of the original picture, for the red will fade, leaving the yellow and blue to predominate, and giving a

prevailing greenish appearance which is both false and unpleasant. For this reason it is recommended that three-colour prints should not be left long exposed in a frame, but that a number of prints should be preserved in a folio and the one in the frame changed from time to time.

40. Another point to be considered in three-colour prints is that the intensity of one colour or another may vary in different prints, owing to variations in the viscosity of the printing inks. As an example, we may suppose that the yellow printing of a series of prints has been completed and dried. The red printing is then proceeded with, and the ink may be slightly too soft and print too freely, with the result that the prints when finished by the final blue printing will show an excess of red. It is an illuminating experience to compare various three-colour reproductions of the same picture with one another, and, still more, to compare them with the original picture. The different reproductions are almost sure to display striking variations in tone and colour, while comparatively few will be found to give a true rendering of the original.

41. The last point which needs mention here is that the smaller the reproduction as compared with the actual picture, the less likely is it to give a true rendering of the colour and the relative tones of the original painting. Consequently, very small colour-reproductions such as picture-postcards should not be used for purposes of serious study, but should be regarded merely as notes or mnemonical aids to recall former observations.

CHAPTER IV.—General Principles for the Selection of Pictures for Schools for Purposes of Direct Instruction.

42. There is no necessity to labour the importance of pictures in connexion with general instruction. Their value as a supplement to verbal description is universally recognised, and few school books are now published without pictures or other illustrative material. When the appeal to the real object is impossible, a picture of it is by far the best substitute, and, indeed, in many cases is the readiest way of ensuring recognition of the real object when it is actually seen. Verbal description, the only alternative, is in many cases impossible, and in any case children, and indeed many adults, find serious difficulty in visualising an object from a verbal description. If reference can be made to a picture, it both clarifies and elucidates difficulties of interpretation, and saves time and the possibility of misconception. A picture not only stimulates intelligence by aiding the child's imagination to visualise history, geography, mathematics and natural history, but gives a sense of actuality, and relates the information of the lesson or text-book with real life.

43. Pictures for use in the classroom fall into two main groups : those which can be set up on the wall or on an easel for purposes of class demonstration, and those which are used for group or individual study by children. Where a lantern is available, the former can often be replaced with advantage by the lantern slide, and where stereoscopes are available, the stereoscopic picture can be used for group or individual study.

44. The essentials of the demonstration picture are that it shall—

- (1) be suited for its special purpose ;
- (2) present an accurate, vivid and convincing picture of the features under consideration ;
- (3) not be overloaded with unessential detail ; and
- (4) be on a sufficient scale to be easily visible to the whole class.

The essentials of pictures for group or individual study are that they shall—

- (1) be clear and not overloaded with irrelevant detail which may distract attention ;
- (2) be accompanied by some indication of the points which they particularly illustrate, and (where necessary) of the scale of the drawing ;
- (3) be on loose sheets so that comparison of different pictures is easily possible.

It is convenient if these pictures for group work are of similar size. We adopt for older children the suggestion of the Historical Association that the picture-postcard be adopted as the unit of size. For younger children rather larger pictures are desirable.

45. We do not propose to discuss in detail the types or subjects of pictures which are suitable for use in the teaching of the different subjects of the curriculum. This has been done already at least in part. Thus, the Historical Association has drawn up a valuable memorandum on the whole question of school pictures for use in the teaching of history. In this subject pictures by great masters, such as portraits of their contemporaries, and paintings of contemporary buildings, scenes and events may have a great value in giving clarity and definition to the impressions of children. The same is true of the use of pictures in connexion with the study of literature. A good picture is often useful in the hands of a skilful teacher in assisting to create the right atmosphere, whether the picture is a direct attempt by the artist to illustrate or to give his personal interpretation of a particular passage of literature, or is merely the expression of a similar mood.

46. The important point is that there is no limit to the number of pictures which can be used with advantage in the teaching of any subject. Every well-equipped and live school will have

an ever-growing supply of pictures for use in this way. It is impossible, and in our opinion undesirable, that these instructional pictures should be displayed on the walls. We are glad to see that the Historical Association share in our view that only pictures of high artistic merit should be used for wall decoration. We strongly recommend that pictures for teaching purposes should be classified and kept in portfolios until they are required. Sir Joshua Fitch made the same recommendation more than forty years ago (*see* paragraph 8).

47. We now come to the difficult and controversial question of training in appreciation. In Chapter V we accept the time-honoured commonplace that man is influenced by his surroundings, but we cannot feel any strong conviction that beautiful surroundings are very effective by themselves when we see around us so many examples of the disregard of beauty where it stands in the way of self-interest. The truth seems to be that the appreciation of beauty is not merely a matter of the emotions, but that the intellect is also deeply concerned. We must understand as far as we are able before we can truly appreciate, if that appreciation is to be a living force. The innate love of beauty holds its own against material interests only when it is fortified by some measure of comprehension of the qualities which make a thing beautiful and have made an emotional appeal.

48. The appreciation of pictures by children may be compared with their appreciation of books. In trying to develop some sort of literary appreciation, the teacher makes an appeal to sympathy and imagination so that the child may desire to understand as far as he is able, and relies upon the growth of an understanding of language which can only come gradually through experience and study. Children, even in their last years at school, have only an elementary understanding of great books : they can be helped to gain a truer idea of the contents, but are not in a position to express an opinion except from their own very limited point of view. To impose a mature judgment on style or subject is to stunt the child's educational growth. This is equally true of pictures, for though the subject of the picture, like the contents of the book, can be made clearer, the subtleties of the language of pictures are as far beyond the child as the deeper significance of books. Moreover, very many people—even Ruskin at times—misread pictures, and are apt to talk about them as if they were meant to be sermons and regard as a mere accident the fact that they are painted.* The vast majority

* A good example is to be found in the letterpress printed in explanation of some beautiful reproductions of famous works of art, published by a certain business firm, and often found in schools. In these explanatory notes the issue is entirely confused, as when Wilkie's "Cross Currents" is interpreted in terms of socialism. The same confusion of thought is common in articles on the appreciation of pictures which appear from time to time in the educational papers.

of people are not sensitive to form and colour nearly so much as to the things they stand for in the practical affairs of life. They like Frith's "Derby Day" because they see in it the humours of the crowd which they understand : they dislike Rembrandt's "Flayed Ox" because the idea of raw meat is repulsive to them, or Brangwyn's "The Rajah's Wedding" because they cannot make it out ; and they do not look for the technical qualities of a picture which are concerned with the appearance of things in the first place. This is particularly true of children, who are oddly matter of fact. It is inevitable also that children will go through stages of admiring various kinds of pictures because they appeal at the moment to their undeveloped sense of form or colour, or because of some comparatively unimportant details which have an obvious meaning to them. An increase in their power of appreciating pictures will more likely be due to a wider outlook gained in the course of their general education, than to any definite instruction on the pictures themselves.

49. The main scope, therefore, of Art appreciation in schools is to include pictures among the many influences which are brought to bear upon children, and to ensure that they not only have ample opportunities for looking at a great many pictures, but that they look at the best that can be chosen.* It is generally found that the success of visits made by children to Picture Galleries, for instance, depends more on their spontaneous interest in the pictures than on any formal attempt to engage their attention on, or to test their knowledge of, the special qualities of the pictures.

Very few teachers are qualified to do anything more than help the children to pick out the more obvious features of the pictures before them, and only those very exceptional individuals who have just the right gifts should adopt such systems of instruction as those which are based on a study of the history of Art, or on a comparison of one picture with another. The ordinary teacher will do most good if he encourages his children to look frequently at pictures and to talk freely about them.

CHAPTER V.—General Principles for the Selection of Pictures for Schools for Purposes of Schoolroom Decoration.

50. The influence of their surroundings on children has been a commonplace of educational theory for centuries, and it is generally held that the school should do much by its silent example to set a standard of living, and to awaken and stimulate

* "The right way to go to work—strange as it may appear—is to look at pictures until we have acquired the power of seeing them. If you look at several thousand good pictures every year, and form some sort of practical judgment about every one of them, you will if you have a wise eye, be able to see what is actually in a picture, and not what you think is in it. And so on with all the arts" (George Bernard Shaw).

a love of beauty. This is probably the chief educational reason why schoolrooms should be made bright and attractive. Unfortunately this is more easily said than done. Although great advance has been made during the last fifty years in the planning of schools, less attention has been paid to the design of classrooms from the point of view of beauty than from that of health and light, and the general aim has been rather to produce convenient and healthy work-rooms than rooms which can be made beautiful. And, in particular, the possibility that space may be required for the hanging of pictures or the display of fine examples of craftsmanship has seldom been allowed to influence the planning and arrangement of the walls, even in the case of the assembly hall. In the vast majority of classrooms, the children sit with their backs to the only wall on which it is possible to hang pictures. Nor has there been any great advance in the design of school fittings and furniture. "No good designer ever seems to be employed for school furniture and equipment. It rarely looks as if a first-class and well-trained intelligence had striven for that perfect economy of perfect means which we recognise in fine natural things."*

51. Any scheme of classroom decoration should naturally be based on the accepted rules for the decoration of interiors, keep a simple wall surface with a pleasant colour for a pleasant room, a bright, light colour for a dark room, etc.; treat all fixtures, doors and windows included, as decorative units by uniting them with the floor level in colour and tone, and so on. For all except new schools, however, the furniture and equipment are settled, and all that can be done is to see that the walls harmonize with them. For the dado, a warm brown, analogous with the furniture in colour, will unify the lower part of the room with the fittings, and a lighter, warm tint above the dado will continue the scheme. Almost certainly there will be some things—ventilators, corbels, etc.—which cannot be related to the structure or arrangement of the room, but which must be brought into the scheme. If breadth of effect is aimed at, some approach to simplicity will be attained, and this simplicity will give the best background for the display of such objects of beauty as the room possesses. In the main it will be necessary to depend for permanent decoration upon beautiful objects which can be displayed for the purpose. Flowers, sculpture, fine examples of craftsmanship of various kinds, will be used in some schools, but, as a general rule, the school will have to have recourse to good reproductions of pictures. So far as decoration only is concerned, the display of *one* fine object of art, or *one* good picture, will preserve the sense of simplicity of decoration and breadth of effect better than the display of many. This object or picture should be changed for another at frequent intervals, and with some ceremony, but association with *one* good

* Mr. B. J. Fletcher, Art and Craftsmanship in Education, *Forum of Education*, 1926, p. 121. We are indebted to this paper for various points in this and the following two paragraphs.

thing at a time will do more good than association with a number of things however good, which are continuously displayed.

52. The gradual growth and diffusion of the recognition of pictures as a means of school decoration have been described above in Paragraphs 1-18. It has admittedly resulted in a marked improvement in the standard to which a schoolroom ought to approximate, although there are still too many schools where the walls are covered only with maps, inartistic diagrams, and crude illustrations. Even where the attempt has been made to replace these by framed pictures the choice of picture has often been haphazard and unenlightened, and the arrangement and hanging are most unpleasing to the eye. "It seems inconsistent that we should give a great deal of care and attention to the appearance of our own houses and rooms, and give relatively little to classrooms which, during impressionable years, are the environment for all young children." If the influence of this environment is to be formative of a sense of order and fitness, the arrangement of the walls must set an irreproachable example. If that influence is to strengthen the child's natural, but untrained, sense of colour and composition, and to lead to an increasing appreciation of things beautiful in themselves, the pictures must be chosen with this end in view. It seems to us obvious that there are two essential conditions which the pictures ought to satisfy. They ought to be such that they will attract and hold the attention and interest of the children, and they ought to be such that they will set a sound standard of taste.

53. So far as our observation goes, children are far more catholic in their liking for pictures than is often supposed, and the few experiments which have been made to test the power of appreciation of young children show that their natural and unguided taste is surprisingly sound. It is only later that their taste deteriorates under the influence of the street advertisement, the comic picture postcard, the newspaper and the cinema. It has generally been assumed that children up to the ages of seven or eight prefer pictures of children and animals, or of local actions such as children's play, feeding animals, ducks swimming, with which they are familiar, and that it is necessary to treat these "subjects" simply, with little detail, and in bold, definite colour. There is possibly some truth in this, but it must not be pushed too far. There is no doubt that colour has a great attraction for children, and it is important that every encouragement should be given to their natural love of colour. But it is common experience that detail, so long as it has a meaning for him, does not repel the child, and it is undoubtedly true that part of the attraction of a picture for very many children lies in the fact that there is more in the picture than is to be seen at a glance, and that it takes time and study to master it in all its detail. The London Infants' School child will give but a glance to a bold decorative landscape poster, but will pore for ten minutes over the poster of "St. Pancras Station" with its crowded detail of platform movement.

54. In the next stage, which extends roughly up to the age of eleven or twelve, the child's interest seems to move from pictures of his own surroundings to pictures which introduce him to a wider world of incident and action. He shows a decided preference for pictures which illustrate a story already known to him through the pages of literature or history, or which suggest a story he can weave for himself.

55. The liking for pictures in which the appeal is impersonal—landscapes, seascapes, cloudscapes—comes later, and as a rule earlier in the case of girls than of boys. It is often connected with the growth of kindred emotional liking for good literature. But it comes at an age when children are naturally reticent about their feelings, and are reluctant to put into words the reasons why they like or dislike a picture. There can be little doubt that the appeal is to new emotions in their first awakening, and arouses feelings vague because of their newness.

56. Whether this attempt to analyse the child's attitude towards pictures is complete or not, one thing at least is certain. There is nothing in his natural liking for pictures which need in the least conflict with the choice of those pictures for school decoration which will lay the foundations of a sound standard of taste. So long as a picture is not too strange in subject or treatment, it will attract and hold his attention. The one thing that matters is that the pictures or reproductions hung on the walls shall be good.

57. It would take us too far afield if we attempted any discussion of the qualities which distinguish the "good" picture, though our general opinion may be gauged from the points already discussed, and the more technical qualities (such as the use of medium) which would have to be discussed in dealing with original pictures may easily prove to be of minor importance in relation to the reproductions which are all that the Elementary School can expect to possess. Moreover, though it would be possible to submit statements of strong personal convictions, there are no absolute laws of art; the rules or canons of art—the many formal modes which have been accumulated in the practice of the historical schools—however valuable they may be on occasion, are far from requiring invariable obedience. The essential matter is that the picture should possess *unity*, and for any discussion of the various factors—design, drawing, colour, etc.—which are concerned in the creation of the sense of unity, we would refer to the numerous standard books on art.*

58. From the artist's point of view, the subject of a picture is of small importance. Any subject which has occasioned a strong emotional experience in the artist is for him a suitable subject. But for young children especially, the subject of a picture is of

* For example, C. J. Holmes, Notes on the Science of Picture Making.

great importance. It is through interest in the subject that children pass most easily to interest in the picture. Most children are attracted throughout their school days by Millais's "Boyhood of Raleigh" and Yeames's "And when did you last see your father?"—both "good" pictures—which recall a story already known, or suggest one which they can weave for themselves, but the attraction starts from the associations which the subjects recall, and not from the technical qualities of the picture. Only in exceptional cases is the artistic temperament manifested during childhood.

59. We recommend, accordingly, that in the selection of easel pictures for wall decoration, regard should be had to this predilection on the part of children. This does not involve in the selection any departure from the accepted standard of what is a "good" picture on the ground that that standard is too high for children, but, on the other hand, that standard must not be interpreted in too doctrinaire a manner, nor lay premature stress on technical qualities. In practice, this means that—

1. The pictures chosen should be good in design and technique.
2. In order to enlist interest from the start the subjects should be attractive to children and easily understood.
3. Pictures whose excellence depends solely on technical qualities which are too far beyond the child's grasp should be ruled out.

For very young children great concessions must obviously be made. There is no valid reason why the pictures in an Infants' School should not be "good," but much will be achieved if the subject of them should induce children to be favourably disposed to pictures at all.

60. It will assist the teacher in cultivating good taste among his children if the wall pictures are chosen on a plan which corresponds roughly to the natural development of taste in children as described in paragraphs 54 and 55. If such a plan is adopted, we suggest that it should include in the first place some pictures in which the appeal is direct and easily appreciated, but in which the treatment is on the whole simple. As examples we may instance such pictures as—

| | | | |
|------------------------------------|----|----|------------------|
| The Boyhood of Raleigh | .. | .. | Millais. |
| Friday | .. | .. | Dendy Sadler |
| Maiwand : Saving the Guns | .. | .. | Caton Woodville. |
| Faithful unto Death | .. | .. | Poynter. |
| Last of the Garrison | .. | .. | Briton Rivière. |
| Off Valparaiso | .. | .. | Somerscales. |
| 'Twixt Wind and Tide | .. | .. | Napier Hemy. |
| Pandora | .. | .. | Waterhouse. |
| The Sleepy River Somme | .. | .. | East. |
| The Horse Fair | .. | .. | Rosa Bonheur. |
| The Lighthouse | .. | .. | Stanhope Forbes. |

But the list is far from exhaustive, and is not intended to serve any purpose other than that of making clear the type of picture and treatment which we have in mind.

61. There should, next, be some pictures in which, while the appeal is still direct and easily appreciated, the treatment differs in that the artist has given a special individual and personal interpretation of what he saw. As examples we may instance such pictures as—

| | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|-------------|
| Napoleon on board the Bellerophon | ... | Orchardson. |
| The Laughing Cavalier | ... | Hals. |
| Dante and Beatrice | ... | Holiday. |
| The Cloud | ... | Finnie. |
| Richard III | ... | Abbey. |
| Sunset at Land's End | ... | Olsson. |
| Dark Angers | ... | Cameron. |
| Love's Baubles | ... | Byam Shaw. |

Again, the list is not intended to be exhaustive, or anything more than by way of illustration.

62. And, thirdly, there should be some pictures which are definitely harder for the child to appreciate, the subject-matter being less important and the artist's method of treatment more important. Among these there will be a greater proportion of Old Masters and pictures by foreign artists whose outlook is strange to an English child. It will even include some of the great masterpieces which are definitely beyond the child's understanding, because it is worth while that a child should grow up in daily contact with some of the pictures which he will hear about all his life if he hears about pictures at all. As examples of pictures which we consider suitable at this stage we may instance—

| | | |
|---|-----|------------|
| Queen Elizabeth going on board the Golden Hind | ... | Brangwyn. |
| Infanta Margarita Teresa | ... | Velasquez. |
| Diana of the Uplands | ... | Furse. |
| The Artist's Mother | ... | Whistler. |
| The Doge | ... | Bellini. |
| Portrait of an Old Lady | ... | Rembrandt. |
| Fighting Téméraire | ... | Turner. |
| The Middelharnis Avenue | ... | Hobbema. |
| Lorenzo and Isabella | ... | Millais. |

This list can obviously be extended to any length.

63. In the three preceding paragraphs we have drawn our illustrations from easel pictures of which good reproductions are already in existence, and in doing so, we have been greatly assisted by the collection of pictures and illustrations, which is on permanent exhibition in the County Hall, Westminster Bridge, London. In our survey of existing reproductions we have been struck by the paucity of reproductions of good modern pictures

of breezy landscapes and seascapes, and should have liked to see more examples of the work of such British artists as Arnesby Brown, Terrick Williams, Clausen, Oliver Hall, Adrian Stokes, Compton, Russell Flint, Charles Simpson, Cayley Robinson, Lee Hankey, Lamorna Birch, Glyn Philpot and David Murray.

64. It is of the utmost importance that the reproductions should be good. No reproduction should ever be bought unless the purchaser has some sort of expert assurance as to its accuracy, or, best of all, has had an opportunity of actually comparing it with the original. There are very many pictures hanging on the walls of our schools which are nothing short of travesties of the artist's technique. This, it may be said, applies to some of the reproductions most commonly seen of the pictures named above.

65. Attention is also necessary to the framing of the pictures which are to be hung on the schoolroom walls. Frames should enhance the value of a picture, and not swamp it, nor weaken it, nor compete with it in attractiveness. It is a mistake to adopt a uniform width of moulding ; what is suitable for a large picture is unsuitable for a small one. Thus, a dark heavy oak frame will put a small print into mourning at once. A one-inch matt black is generally suitable, at least for all pictures framed up to imperial size, unless the work is very heavy and full.

66. In conclusion, a brief reference is necessary to photographs, conventionalised pictures and posters, since all are frequently made use of in schools for wall decoration.

Photographs.—As a rule, photographs, and especially coloured photographs of natural objects and scenery, are, in our opinion, unsuitable for wall decoration. We regard them as belonging to the class of pictures for direct instruction, and have already recommended in paragraph 46 that they should be kept in portfolios and only displayed when actually required for definite lessons. Groups and other photographs of special interest to a school, such as portraits of old scholars or photographs of athletic teams, generally look better when grouped together than when scattered over the walls of the schoolrooms.

67. *Conventionalised Pictures.*—A convention in art is a deliberate abstraction from the normal visual appearances of things, justified by some particular application in view. As a special instance of a convention the *fresco* may be mentioned. A fresco is in itself a part of a larger architectural design ; it should be regarded solely as the decoration of a flat wall-surface, and being difficult in technique and needing great rapidity of execution, it cannot partake of the same detailed treatment as an easel picture. The stability of a flat wall-surface should never be betrayed by a painted resemblance to the effects of what the Italians termed " chiaroscuro," or aerial perspective. A comparison of the work of the French master, Puvis de Chavannes,

on the walls of the Panthéon in Paris with some of the adjacent work on similar wall-surfaces will at once impress this truth on the observer.*

There is some danger in displaying, quite out of the setting of the original, reproductions of such conventions. A healthy-minded child regards as odd (and ought to regard as odd) the treatment of life that he sees in the House of Lords panels. This series is so interesting in subject, and so splendid in design and colour, that it would be impossible to rule it out altogether from the school. But the series is suitable only for the older children. The conventions in these panels are : (1) surface modelling is very much simplified ; (2) detail is given in disregard to focus (see the flowered embroidery on Plantagenet's gown) ; (3) little attempt is made to throw distant objects back into the picture (see the wall in the Temple garden) ; and (4) very distant objects are generally avoided.

68. *Posters*.—The very great improvement of late years in the artistic qualities of pictorial advertisements makes it worth while to come to some conclusion about the growing practice of using such pictures as decorations on the walls of the school. In particular, a recent series of railway posters, designed by Royal Academicians and other distinguished artists, has caught the public fancy and many of them are now to be found framed and displayed in the classrooms or the central hall.

It would seem almost ungracious to criticise the use of these generally able productions as school decorations, and indeed—though the designs vary greatly in merit and appropriateness—it may be said without more ado that a school is lucky to obtain at so small a cost a picture as good as the best of them.

There is, however, one characteristic of the poster (and the series just referred to may be quoted as a particular instance of a general principle) which discounts its suitability for school decoration. A good poster is not necessarily a good interior wall picture. To effect its original purpose it must be capable of being "read" at a great distance, nearly always in the open air and often in distracting surroundings. It must be bold to such a degree that, looked at under normal picture-viewing conditions, it must appear crude and almost unintelligible. A poster which, seen on a hoarding from the top of a train, delights us by its brilliant and sympathetic treatment of tones and surfaces, would hardly make sense in an ordinary room, and there is some danger in assuming that what was so harmonious at one distance will be equally harmonious at another. The best easel pictures

* For an example of disregard of the above principle we may instance Stanhope Forbes's "Fire of London" in the Royal Exchange, London. Here an effective easel picture becomes by its excessive aerial perspective a bad fresco.

make bad posters, and the best posters bad easel pictures : each is out of focus when not viewed from the distance demanded by the purpose for which it was painted.

To say all this is merely to give a necessary warning. In a large central hall, the conditions may approximate to those which the poster-artist originally contemplated, and, on the other hand, a delicately painted poster, which missed fire on the hoarding, may come into its own on the walls of the classroom.

CHAPTER VI.—Summary of Conclusions.

69. It will be convenient to gather together in a summary the conclusions to which we have come on the matters which have been referred to us.

- (1) We cannot rely upon Picture Galleries for the cultivation of good taste and a sense of beauty among children, because this country is not sufficiently well provided with galleries (Paragraphs 24, 34).
- (2) Schools require pictures
 - (a) for purposes of aesthetic training. This is the ultimate justification for providing schools with good pictures (Paragraphs 19–28).
 - (b) for purposes of direct instruction (Paragraph 29).
 - (c) for purposes of wall decoration (Paragraphs 29, 51).
- (3) School pictures for decoration and aesthetic training should not be produced specially for the purpose. The masterpieces of great artists should be used (Paragraphs 32–33).
- (4) Since schools must depend on reproductions, care is necessary to secure adequate and good ones (Paragraphs 34–41, 64).
- (5) Pictures for direct instruction when used for demonstration and class purposes should
 - (a) be suited for their special purpose ;
 - (b) present an accurate, vivid and convincing picture of the features under consideration ;
 - (c) not be overloaded with unessential detail ;
 - (d) be on a sufficient scale to be easily visible to the whole class (Paragraph 44).
- (6) Pictures for direct instruction when used for group or individual study should
 - (a) be clear and not overloaded with irrelevant detail which may distract attention ;
 - (b) be accompanied by some indication of the points which they particularly illustrate, and of the scale of the drawing ;
 - (c) be on loose sheets so that comparison of different pictures is easily possible (Paragraph 44).

- (7) Pictures for direct instruction should be classified and kept in portfolios, and not hung permanently on the walls (Paragraph 46).
 - (8) Teachers should rather encourage children to look at pictures than attempt to teach "appreciation" (Paragraphs 47-49).
 - (9) For purposes of decoration and aesthetic training in the Elementary School,
 - (a) the pictures chosen should be good in design and technique;
 - (b) the subjects of the pictures should be attractive to children and easily understood;
 - (c) pictures whose excellence depends solely on technical qualities which are too far beyond the child's grasp should be excluded (Paragraph 59).
 - (10) There is a deficiency of reproductions of breezy landscapes and seascapes, and of the work of modern British artists (Paragraph 63).
 - (11) Attention is necessary to the framing of pictures (Paragraph 65).
 - (12) Conventionalised pictures and posters should be used with due regard to their special limitations (Paragraphs 67-68).
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